SOME NEW BOOKS.

At the Back of China.

It is fortunate for readers that it was some six years ago put into the mind of the VICOMTE D'OLLONE, Captain in the French army and author of *In Forbidden China* (Small, Maynard & Co.) that the western provinces of China, from the northern boundary of French Indo-China to the Gobi Desert and the Great Wall in Mongolia, offered one of the few fruitful fields for exploration left on the surface of a planet mostly exhausted and "done to death." His enthusiasm enlisted the interest of all the French institutions concerned in the possible results of his explorations. Finally the French Ministry of War granted the necessary permission to the four members of the mission, all four of them of the army, three commissioned officers and the fourth a sergeant-major who has since obtained his commission. One of the officers was especially equipped for geographical and topographical research (in the course of the expedition he discovered that on the accepted maps an important river is set down nearly sixty miles from its actual line); another was a sinologue with five years of residence in China behind him; the sergeant was the quartermaster of the expedition. It disappeared into the unknown to the north of Indo-China in August, 1906, and emerged into the comparative familiarity and civilization of Mongolia some time in the summer of 1909. Oddly, almost on the day of its emergence, it encountered another expedition, also French, which had been projected across Asia from west to east while itself was painfully working up from south to north. Each expedition had through all its vicissitudes reserved a single bottle of champagne for great emergencies. At the meeting, which occurred at Leang Chau, in Mongolia, in July, 1909, it was unanimously voted that the emergency had arrived and the bottles were emptied.

After being duly overhauled by the scientific bodies concerned the scientific results of the d'Ollone mission are to be set forth in seven volumes, doubtless of a value proportionate to their bulk and their illegibility. The results are thus summed up by the leader of the expedition: "Five thousand miles of itineraries, of which 1,670 were absolutely unknown; 2,000 photographs of types, costumes, monuments and characteristic landscapes; more than two hundred complete anthropological measurements, forty-six vocabularies of non-Chinese dialects, four dictionaries of native characters previously unknown or undeciphered, thirty-two Lolo manuscripts, 225 inscriptions relating to historical events in Chinese, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Mongol, Manchu, Arabic and Lolo; the almost unique and undiscoverable monographs of forty-two cities, numerous weapons, utensils, examples of pottery, paintings, currency, &c., and, finally, an abundant harvest of observations." For the purposes of the ordinary reader, however, the best result of the expedition is the present lively volume by its chief. Capt. d'Ollone is an excellent and practised writer as well as a keen observer. He was already the author of a book on "Progressive and Militant China," in which he maintained that, quite contrary to the common notion, the Chinese are a highly religious and at bottom a fighting people, two propositions to which he frequently recurs in these pages. Two of the Tibetan chapters of this book have already appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. The French text is well translated by Bernard Miall, and rivalled in interest by over a hundred good photographs which illustrate it. For all popular purposes it is likely to remain the record of the d'Ollone mission of 1906-09.

The countries of the Lolos and the Miao Tze, the former almost due north and the latter northeast of Tongking, were the first objectives of the expedition. The entrance to either is Yunnan Sen. To this Chinese city it was from the frontier of Tongking, when the expedition started six years ago, sixteen days ride on horseback. But Capt. d'Ollone regretfully records that the details of the journey are no longer worth recording, seeing that since it was made a railway opened in 1910 enables the distance to be made in two days. The Lolo country was attractive to the French explorer on account of its inaccessibility. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that no white man had visited it before him. Even the indefatigable English traveller Colborne Baber had been compelled to turn back at the frontier. Capt. d'Ollone relied, and as it turned out with justice, upon the intervention of a French priest then stationed on the border of the Lolo country as "pro-vicar apostolic," but since made a bishop in those parts.

The ordinary atlases recognize the position of the Lolos as foreigners in the Chinese Empire by outlining their possessions in a different tint from their surroundings. The Lolo country in fact constitutes another Andorra, though of far greater extent and of much greater population. The Lolos are not Chinese in appearance, in language or in manners and customs. The defiant topknot they wear in place of the queque of servitude is a badge of distinction and, as they are justified in feeling, of superiority. Their inaccessibility has protected them thus far, their inaccessibility and their military prowess. "The mountain nymph sweet Liberty" again vindicates herself. It is also true that they have little which foreigners covet. The "wax insect," which has the secret of extracting merchantable treasure from the trees of the hot Chinese plains is itself obtained only in "The Great Cold Mountains," which, according to the local location, are the home of the Lolos. The Chinese traders visit Lololand in quest of the insect. Some Lolo takes them under his protection and becomes responsible for their good behavior, naturally for a consideration paid in advance. The life of a Chinese without this protection is not worth a day's purchase. On the other hand Lolos may safely enter Chinese territory, only leaving their arms with some municipal official when they enter a town, to be resumed when they leave it. As a guarantee of their good behavior to Chinese on Chinese territory they leave hostages with the local authorities. Moreover, the Chinese pay an actual tribute to the nearest tribe of Lolos to be secured from molestation. Capt. d'Ollone says "clan" instead of tribe. And, indeed, the relations of the warlike Lolos with their richer industrial neighbors recall those of the Scottish Highlanders before the disarmament, as they were also recalled by Stevenson in Polynesia, where the inaccessibility of insularity is substituted for that of altitude. Like the other highlanders, the Lolos have their excellent points. Their hospitality is inviolable. Thanks to the good offices of his missionary, all that the French explorer had to do in order to gain entrance to the theoretically forbidden country was to give an assurance that he was not seeking to "locate mining claims," a process which the mountaineers hold in great horror. Then a responsible Lolo became surety for him and his party.

The Lolos were found to be a peculiar people. Their social system is the feudalism of a pastoral nation. The care of flocks and herds is "the occupation of a gentleman." Horsemanship and skill in arms are essential to his character. The arms are bows and arrows and long lances, from fifteen to twenty feet in extent. Firearms are oftener seen than heard. They are owned and shown, though mostly of an antiquated pattern, but mainly as articles of bric-a-brac, seeing that cartridges are almost unattainable and that crude gunpowder appears to be unknown. Never, at the back of China, did the revolver practice of the Frenchmen fail to excite wonder. By showing off with his pistol Capt. d'Ollone evaded the challenge of a chieftain to bend his bow, which the explorer ascertained by private trials he could no more move than the suitors the bow of Ulysses. The Lolo nobles, and all Lolos are nobles, are physical giants in strength as in stature. Agriculture is beneath them. Such tillage as there is is relegated to serfs, Chinese captives or the descendants of such, who are despised accordingly. Purity of blood is much more carefully preserved than is usual in such relations. When illicit intercourse is discovered between one of the upper and one of the lower class both parties are expected to commit suicide. The Lolos are compelled to find mates in their own class, and there marriage is monogamous, with the exception that, in case of barrenness, the husband is allowed to take another wife to perpetuate his family. The position of woman otherwise recalls Tacitus's "Germania" and is adapted to excite the envy of a suffragette. Her choice is nowise constrained, provided she marries in her own "set." After marriage she returns to her parents if and when she chooses, and the deserted husband has no recourse but to renew his courtship, at his own risk. If he fails to induce his wife to return to him, he naturally becomes ridiculous, but she incurs no social or other penalties by refusal.

The first stages of the journey northward from Lololand were not very eventful, except for some tremendous climbing, from 1,800 feet to 10,000 in two days, the explorer reckons. There is, of course, a great rise from the starting point on the China Sea to the "Roof of the World" in Tibet. On this journey, however, the explorer was lucky enough to secure rubbings of two Lolo inscriptions of ancient date and to compile from them a vocabulary which Chinese scholars assured him contained characters that had not been in use since 200 B. C. He passed also through a strip of the country of the Miao-Tze which had never been brought into complete subjection to China. But the exploration of the country of the really independent Miao-Tze he had intrusted to a subordinate and is only able to tell about them at second hand and in a less interesting way than that in which he records his personal observations. He makes it clear enough, though, that they occupy another extensive tract of China with a race entirely alien to any of the races which, or the mixture of which, we recognize as Chinese; that they constitute another tribe, or nationality, of "the non-Chinese in China." Perhaps the greatest triumph of this detached exploration was the finding and photographing of "the granite stupa," an octagonal monument of seven stories carved with great and artistic elaboration and bearing what the explorer declares to be "the only inscription in Sanskrit yet unearthed." The date assigned to it is from the tenth to the thirteenth century.

After these excursions the reunited expedition started again from Yunnan Sen for its exploration of the country of what the Chinese call the "Western barbarians," Si-Fan. As soon as it broke new ground to the north of Lololand it found itself in a country unquestionably Buddhist, and interspersed at frequent intervals with Buddhist monuments which, if not altogether unvisited by white man, had never before been visited by white men furnished with cameras. As has been said, it was a tremendous climb, and upon arriving at the great Tibetan plateau the explorer was impressed with the languorous and meandering curves of great rivers, succeeding the swift torrents of the ascent, and winding their almost level way 13,000 feet above sea level. The pack horse had given way as a beast of burden to the yak, even to two kinds of yak, the one a comparatively tame and villatic animal, being a cross of the real yak with the common cow, the other the real native yak, much larger and much less tractable. A land of huge, fierce mastiffs, of flocks and herds and lamas and lamaseries. On the treeless wastes of the roof of the world the only fuel is "argol," a cryptic name for the dried dung of animals, and the search for it at those attitudes and in the times of fierce blizzards is often a matter of life and death. The narrative becomes one of hairbreadth escapes from perils of all kinds, perils of the elements and perils of hostile natives, whether fierce lancers or inhospitable lamas. It is a wonder how the explorers survived it all.

But their luck was marvellous, first in falling in with the inevitable and indispensable French missionary just in the nick of time, the missionary familiar with the "customs of the country." Then in falling in, again in the nick of time with the great semi-annual caravan which visits the plateau to bring what it needs from without, mainly tea, and to carry away in return the hides which constitute the one "money crop" of the pastoral population. The expedition did not go to Lhassa, like the British military expedition of 1904. It did better by going to Lhabrang, whereby its chief was enabled to interview the Dalai Lama, the "Living Buddha" whom the British scared away from his capital, and who had up till then been seen by very few white men, one of the few being Mr. Rockhill, at present American Ambassador to Constantinople. The Dalai Lama Capt. d'Ollone not only saw but accompanied for the first stage of his journey to Pekin to vulgarize himself for the first time in history.

It is a fascinating story. The teller of it has a literary gift much beyond what usually falls to the lot of an explorer, a gift of speculation as well as of description; writes much better, in fact, than we have reason to expect of a man who can do things as well as describe them. It would have been vain to hope that an English writing explorer would make so excellent a story. But throughout this Frenchman's modest narrative it is plain that he owes his success even more to pluck than to luck, that he has in full measure the virtue of dogged perseverance which we are fond of claiming as exclusively "Anglo-Saxon."

New Light on English Speech.

The great Oxford dictionary of the English language, projected and carried on by Dr. James Murray and his associates, has advanced so far that its completion within a short time is expected confidently. It is one of the most remarkable achievements in patient scholarship of modern times and, almost from the time the collectors of words began work, has been full of surprises to men who had reason to think that they knew something about English. Words that seemed to be modern slang have turned out to be old and respectable forms; words accepted by all as long established have been discovered to be of comparatively recent origin. Many have been traced to the author who first used them, many etymologies have been shown to be incorrect, others have been settled, and plenty of hard nuts have been left for future philologists to crack. The chief service the dictionary has done probably, has been to establish the history of each word on a firm foundation by giving the evidence, so far as it goes, showing the forms each has taken, the different shades of meaning it has passed through, and giving chapter and verse for every statement. It has changed the received views in so many points that the books on language addressed to the general public by men like Max Müller, W. D. Whitney, Archbishop Trench, Isaac Taylor and others, which were popular and deservedly esteemed a generation ago, must now be read with caution and all require revision.

It is not so surprising that books intended to make popular the knowledge acquired in the compilation of the dictionary should now appear, as that they should have been so long in coming. Two small volumes on quite different plans, but both inspired by the dictionary, have appeared at the same time. *The English Language*, by LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH, M. A., is part of the useful series of little books in the "Home University Library," published by Williams and Norgate in London and Henry Holt and Company in New York. It deals intentionally with generalities and is in substance a history of the development of the language, with philosophical comments on the part of the author, with such examples from the dictionary as demonstrate the point he wishes to make. It is a book for the general public rather than the student of language. *The Romance of Words*, by ERNEST WEEKLEY, M. A., professor at University College, Nottingham, on the other hand, reads like a collection of excerpts, gathered to demonstrate an account of the language, which the author hardly thinks it necessary to write out. He has collected many interesting etymologies, which are all to the point, and will be useful to specialists. A striking peculiarity of both books is that the authors are inclined to pass over the phonetics of the language and to deal more particularly with the meanings of words—the branch now called semantics. It looks as though there were a reaction against the rule of the phonetician, who has had the upper hand in philology and even in literature for a generation past, or perhaps it means a belief that the phonetic part of philological work has been done and that it is time now to turn to a new aspect of language.

The oldest deposit in English is the little group of words inherited from the Aryan language. It is interesting to note the change that has taken place in ideas about the Aryans in Mr. Smith's summary. "Although the belief in a homogeneous Aryan race is now abandoned, the evidence of language shows a continuity, if not of race at least of culture. We have little or no historical knowledge of any of the Aryan people, before about 1,000 B. C. Beyond that period to the time of the primitive Aryans there stretches a gap, probably of many thousand years, which we can only cross on this frail bridge of words. The earliest pioneers in language created for themselves out of a few old and battered words the picture of a kind of terrestrial paradise, which they located in the centre of Asia, where five or six thousand years ago they believed that the ancestors of the Aryan races dwelt together in pastoral and poetic simplicity and plenty. Recent criticism has destroyed much of that beautiful picture. Even the Asiatic home of the Aryans is no longer generally believed in, and the most widely accepted of current views is probably that which places their home in the southern part of Russia, whence at their separation the Indian and Persian branch wandered toward the East, the Slavs and Teutons into the German forests, and the Greeks toward Greece, while the ancestors of the Celts and Romans followed the course of the Danube toward Italy and Gaul."

A corrected picture of the early nomad days is drawn by Mr. Smith from these words common to all languages, and later one of the days when the Teutons had wandered off by themselves. He builds up sketches of the culture of each century, when he comes to historic times, from the additions to the English vocabulary of the time, sketches that seem more and more fanciful as he approaches our day. His chapter on the enrichment of the English language by individual writers is also very interesting, though some examples may arouse scepticism. The surprises that the readers' slips for the dictionary have caused are many. We may quote some of the words acquired by the language from the medical theories of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These were in the main the Greek theory of "humours" after it had passed through the Arab school; it believed that the body of man contained four humours or liquids, blood, phlegm, yellow bile or choler and black bile (melancholy). From these we have gained the words, sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, good humored, humorous and humor, and have so lost the sense of liquid that we speak of dry humor; likewise temperament, which meant a due mixture of the humors, and complexion with the same significance. With these should be joined, spirited, animal spirits, vital, natural, cold blooded, hearty, cordial, hypochondriacal, hipped, rheumatic and common sense. From the astrology that was interwoven with medicine came lunatic, jovial, saturnine mercurial, influence, disaster, predominant, conjunction, opposition, aspect, disposition, while motor when it first appeared in English meant *primum mobile*. There is much curious information to be learned about other things than language for the student who will trace a few of the words in this list through the dictionary.

Prof. Weekley in his book restricts himself to the main sources of English the Latin and Teutonic languages, though he goes outside these limits whenever he chooses. His examples of early meanings are mainly Elizabethan, but he shows the wide range of his reading and his modernity by quoting not only Mr. Kipling and Mr. Pett Ridge but also Americans like Mr. Meredith Nicholson and Mr. Harrison's "Queed"; his most amusing extracts, however, are from the early dictionary makers, Florio, Cotgrave, Minsheu and Ludwig. Every one of his chapters contains a mass of entertaining material and he shows a strong sense of humor in his comments, which will make the reader regret that he does not expand himself more and make his meaning clearer for the layman. We quote his explanation of greenhorn. "English *green horn* likens an inexperienced person to an animal whose horns have just begun to sprout. In German *Gelbschnabel*, yellow bill, and French *bec-jaune*, we have the metaphor of the fledgling. Ludwig explains *Gelbschnabel* by "chitty face," *chit* cognate with *Kitten*, being a general term in Middle English for a young animal. From *bec-jaune* we have Scots *becjam*, freshman at the university. Cotgrave spells the French word *bejaune*, and gives, as he usually does for such words, a very full gloss, which happens, by exception, to be quotable—'A novice; a late prentice to, or young beginner in, a trade, or art; also, a simple, ignorant, unexperienced asse; a rude, unfashioned, home-bred heydon; a sot, ninny, doult, noddy; one that's blankt, and hath nought to say, when he hath most need to speake.' This is characteristic of the old dictionary makers. The gem of my collection is Ludwig's gloss for *Lümmel*, 'a long lubber, a lazy lubber, a slouch, a lordant, a lordane, a looby, a booby, a tony, a fop, a dunce, a simpleton, a wise-acre, a sot, a logger-head, a block-head, a nickampoop, a lingerer, a drowsy or dreaming lusk, a pill-garlick, a slowback, a lathback, a pitiful sneaking fellow, a lungis, a tall slim fellow, a slim long back, a great he-fellow, a lubberly fellow, a lozel, an awkward fellow.'" It makes us wish that some one would reprint the old dictionaries, which are too good to be monopolized by book collectors.

He gives a brilliant example in warning against accepting obvious etymologies before they have been proved. "Cambridge appears to be the bridge over the Cam. But the river's older name, which it preserves above the town, is the Granta, and Bede calls the river itself Grantacester. Camden notes that the country was called 'in the English Saxon' Grentbrigseyre, and comments on the double name of the river. Nor can he 'easily beleeve that Grant was turned into Cam; for this might seeme a deflexion some what too hardly streined, wherein all the letters but one are quite swallowed up.' Grantabrigge became by dissimilation Gantabrigge, Cantabrigge, Cantbrigge, and by assimilation Cambridge, the river being rechristened from the name of the town." Another curious instance is *petronel*, a flintlock firearm, in size between an arquebus and a pistol, spoken of as late as Walter Scott. On the strength of a French form, *poitrinal*, it has been connected with *poitrine*, chest. Ambroise Paré, the Huguenot surgeon, explained that it was so called because it was fired, not from the shoulder but from the chest, which Prof. Weekley thinks would have been disastrous. Minsheu says it was "a horseman's peece first used in the Pyrenean mountains, which hanged alwayes at their breast readie to shoote," and others followed him. But Cotgrave gives French "*pétrinal*, a petronell, or horseman's peece"; and this is borrowed either from Italian *petronello, pietronello* (Florio) or Spanish *pedreñal*, "a petronall, a horseman's peece, ita dict, quod silice petra incenditur" (Minsheu, Spanish Dictionary). Thus Minsheu knew the origin of the word, though he followed the fiction in his other dictionary. All the forms go back to pietra or piedra, stone, flint. The new weapon was named from its chief feature, the substitution of the flintlock for the old matchlock.

Prof. Weekley gives an instance of the blunders dictionary makers are in danger of making when they borrow from others. The derivation of curmudgeon is still unknown, but when Dr. Johnson was working on his dictionary some one suggested that it came from cœur méchant, so he printed: "It is a vitious manner of pronouncing cœur méchant, Fr. an unknown correspondent," honestly giving his authority. Dr. John Ash followed with his dictionary and gave the derivation, "From the French cœur, unknown, and méchant, a correspondent." Less glaring blunders and misprints have given rise to "ghost words" that are copied from one dictionary into another. Thus in Mainwayring's "Seaman's Dictionary" (1644) the old word carvel, applied to a special build of ship, was misprinted carnell, and that word persisted in even technical dictionaries to the end of the eighteenth century.

We can only quote at random from the more systematic parts of Prof. Weekley's book. Under the "wanderings of words" he gives hussar, which entered Germany from Hungary, where it meant a freebooter; this came from Servia, where it also means pirate, and is derived from a Greek form of the Vulgar Latin cursarius, from currere, to run, which is also the origin of our corsair. He thought the word ampersand for & was obsolete, but ran across it in two successive days in Quiller-Couch and Pett Ridge. "Children used to repeat the alphabet thus—A per se A, B per se B, and so on to And per se And." As examples of degeneration in words he gives the terms for woman. "Thus hussy, housewife; quean, woman; wench, child; have absorbed such adjectives as impudent, idle, light, saucy, &c. With wench, still used without any disparaging sense by country folk, we may compare French *garce*, lass, and German *Dirne*, maid servant, both of which are now insulting epithets, but, in the older language could be applied to Joan of Arc and the Virgin Mary respectively. Garce was replaced by fille, which has acquired in its turn a meaning so offensive that it has now given way to jeune fille. Minx is probably the Low German minsk, German Mensch, human, but also used in the sense of wench. These examples show that the indignant 'Who are you calling a woman?' is philologically in all likelihood a case of intelligent anticipation." "In 1907 a play by J. M. Synge was produced in Dublin, but the audience broke up in disorder at the word shift. This is all the more ludicrous when we reflect that shift, change of raiment, is itself an euphemism for smock." "We have the absurd name pocket handkerchief, which means pocket hand cover head, for a comparatively modern convenience, the earlier names of which have more of the directness of the Artful Dodger's 'wipe.' Ben Jonson calls it a muckinder." We regret that space forbids our touching the author's abundant etymologies of proper names, for which he seems to have a weakness.

There is not a page of Prof. Weekley's book that does not provide material like this for the philologist's entertainment. It is difficult to read consecutively, however, for the same reason that the dictionary is. Every dip into it will repay the reader. Both this and Mr. Smith's little book show the advance made in language studies in the past few years. Neither would have been possible without the Murray dictionary. We can recommend them to all who are interested in the English language.

Maupassantiana.

The reader who picks up *Recollections of Guy de Maupassant by His Valet Francois* (John Lane Company), recalling that no man is a hero to his valet, will be apt to expect an exposure rather than an appreciation. In fact he will be apt to finish the book with a higher opinion of his subject as a human being than he had before. Francois confines himself to the human aspect of his hero (in spite of the proverb), and does not set up for a literary critic. He gives us some interesting details of the novelist's productivity. This was in truth enormous, and readers are apt to be blinded to it by the fact that the aggregate of his "life work" is not beyond the average, forgetting in how short a time it was produced. For Maupassant did not begin until he was 30, and died at 43, the last two years having been unproductive. So that all his work was in effect done in a decade. Taking that into consideration, and taking also the meticulous care which marks his work, which has little of the character of improvisation and much that of deliberate artistry, and it is clear that he kept at it very closely for these ten productive years. We are prepared for Francois's assertion that when he had the indiscretion, one day on the Riviera, to look over the day's work, he found it to cover thirty-seven foolscap pages. Looking into the kitchen of the Paris flat one evening, the writer broke out to his valet, who was also at the time his cook and factotum: "Everywhere I saw a violent current rising and about to swallow up all members of society who don't know how to defend themselves by the wholesome habits resulting from steady work. Work is such a delightful thing as long as health lasts. I do not know, but I really think I could not give up work. Sometimes I may have said I worked only because I wanted money. It is not quite true; there are things I love to write about." Evidently, from the results, he was far from being a "frivole."

Naturally, Maupassant did not talk literature to his servant, even when in the course of the ten years service the servant had become his friend. But he thought aloud before the quick witted valet, upon whom nothing seems to have been lost. His idolatry of his baptismal and literary godfather, Flaubert, comes out in the course of these walks and talks. He was delighted to hear that Francois had read "Madame Bovary" and "Salambbo," and praised the deliberation of Flaubert even at the expense of his own impetuosity, saying that "Salambbo" was worth the fifteen years it had cost "the finest brain of our century." He even gave hints of his own method. "You understand, Francois, to see and to distinguish, the eye must be educated; therefore, when you look you must notice everything; never be content with want of precision; you must give time for the eye to define and to follow out those things which are but faintly visible. It is only by slow and patient practice that you can make your eyes do all the work of which they are capable." That he practised what he preached is plain enough to every reader of his things. It is equally plain from this narrative, which often recounts the deliberation and absorption with which he examined a new environment, in North Africa, in the Alps or where not. "Today I forwarded to Paris the manuscript of 'Le Horla'; before a week elapses all the papers will publish that I am mad. It is just as they please, but I am perfectly sane, and knew very well what I was doing when I was writing that tale."

But what glimpses we get here about the literary theory and practice of the novelist are episodical. The book is about the man. He was a huge enjoyer who made the most of all his opportunities in that way. Henry James in his admirable criticism of a quarter of a century ago notes from the work itself that "his instrument is that of the senses, and it is through them alone or almost alone that life appeals to him. They render him this great assistance because they are evidently, in his constitution, extraordinarily alive; there is scarcely a page in all his volumes that does not testify to their vivacity." One is still more strongly reminded of this by this chronicle of the last decade of the writer's life. His locomotive propensity seems almost morbid. One does not understand how a writer can be so little rooted and in appearance so restless and yet acomplish so much. To be sure, in compressing the events of ten years into a volume, the flittings naturally fill a larger space on the printed pages than they did in fact. But the sensuous charm of climate was what primarily kept Maupassant moving. He had a place, though apparently not an inherited place, in his native Normandy, whither he resorted in the autumn. When the Parisian winter became unpleasant to him, he packed up "his dictionaries," as the valet tells us, and was off to his own house or his own apartment on the Riviera, spending much of his days and some of his nights on his boat. He even managed to do some writing afloat. His boat, when he first took Francois to the Mediterranean with him, was a small craft, too small for voyages, on which he kept one "hand." When his first great success came to him, he bought a larger one which took two men before the mast and was really seaworthy; gratefully naming her the "Bel Ami" in honor of the "book that had helped him" to indulge in her. The skipper was a capital sailor himself, as his boatmen gladly owned, a capital oarsmen and a capital swimmer. He was a crack shot also with pistol or fowling piece. To show off to Francois he "called" the leaf he was about to shoot from a tree, and it came down, at a distance measured by the valet of twenty-eight paces. Six friends came to him at Etretat for a day's shooting of quail and partridge, and his bag at the end of the day was by far the biggest. In England he would have passed for an "all round man." Readers who know him only by the photographs and who would take him from them for a son of the Midi rather than of Normandy will be surprised by the testimony of Francois that his mustache was "fair" and his hair brown.

Few men were better equipped for "the joy of living," and few men can have enjoyed life more than he enjoyed it until the collapse came. His chosen companions were by no means the literary and artistic Parisians. He had Dumas and Zola to dinner, separately, and confided to Francois that the former was delightful, but that though he admired Zola's books ("his literary value is very considerable") he did not at all like the man. He was touched by Gounod's request for some verses for the composer to set, though it does not appear that he wrote them. But his habitual associates were not the men of his own guild, nor indeed men or women of any specialty. He liked people with whom he could play pranks, on whom he could even play practical jokes, as when at a place he had for the season down the Seine he arranged that the clocks should be set back so that his guests might lose the last train to Paris, or when he sent to a ladies' luncheon a box to be opened at table, from which when the lid was taken off was sprung a flight of dolls. It is noted as unique that an English nobleman who spent a week at Etretat had not a single trick played upon him. But even this favored guest his host could not forbear from hoaxing. He told Francois afterward: "I went to see the monastry of the Benedictines at Fecamp with Lord ——. He also wanted to see the Maison Tellier, which is situated in reality at Rouen, but I had my reasons for transporting the story to Fecamp. I showed him a house at Fecamp and he recognized it by the description in the tale. It was very "funny." There was a little schoolmistress, whose boyish appearance had struck him when she applied for and received his influence with the Minister of Public Instruction to get her a place. A year later he induced her to put on male attire and be his guest at dinner, together with a couple of society ladies, in the character of a schoolboy. His delight was unbounded when he found that neither of the other guests penetrated the disguise, nor yet Francois, who waited the table, and to whom he confided the secret, with peals of laughter, the next morning.

Nothing in the book is more attractive than the picture of the storyteller's relations with those with whom he lived. His sailors adored him. His grocer on hearing of his death burst into tears, the first his wife had seen him shed in fifteen years. Especially touching was Maupassant's relation to his mother, who had a large villa near his own little place in Normandy and took an apartment on the Riviera to be near him when he was there. It is interesting, though not to the British or American matron edifying, to learn that he discussed with her beforehand the plots of "Mont-Oriol" and of "Fort comme la Mort," and that she could never reconcile herself to the tragic ending of the second. She was a most accomplished woman, setting a smatterer in the classics right on Greek and Latin and speaking two or three modern languages in perfection, or what seemed perfection to the good Francois.

Incorrigible and unscrupulous moralists insisted at the time of the novelist's awful death that it was the work of Nemesis or "Poena," as Horace has it. Really this book seems to give them some aid and comfort. Women, singly or in groups, come and go in these pages as guests of a bachelor without attracting from Francois more than a casual glance. There is one, however, of whom he speaks with great bitterness, denouncing her as a "vampire," and declaring that but for her his master might have lived long. She appears and disappears and reappears "in a gray tailor made dress with a gold belt." She shadowed the last decade of Maupassant's life. One day he told Francois that he had seen her first in 1883 on an island in the Seine, alone and buried in "Une Vie." The last we hear of her is by a telegram of New Year's greeting in 1892, that very New Year's day when Maupassant cut his throat at Cannes, saying just afterward to his valet, "This is absolute madness." It was just after the attempt upon his own life that he was removed to the retreat at Passy, where his faithful servant could not remain with him, and where he died in July, 1893. All readers have reason to be grateful to Francois for this modest and pious chronicle.

MUIR PICTURES YOSEMITE.

As He Saw the Wonderful Region During 1868.

One of the strongest features of the Century Company's summer list is serious in nature but fascinating in content and treatment. Moreover, no one book is likely to make a stronger bid for favor from summer tourists than a picture of "The Yosemite" by John Muir. No traveller nowadays, however, can hope to make his approach to this wonderful place and see what Mr. Muir saw on his first trip in 1868.

"When I set out," says Mr. Muir, "on the long excursion that finally led to California I wandered afoot along from Indiana to the Gulf of Mexico with a plant press on my back, holding a generally southward course like the birds when they are going from summer to winter. From the west coast of Florida I crossed the Gulf to Cuba, enjoyed the rich and tropical flora there for a few months, intending to go thence to the north end of South America, make my way through the woods to the headwaters of the Amazon and float down that grand river to the ocean.

"But I was unable to find a ship bound for South America—fortunately, perhaps, for I had incredibly little money for so long a trip and had not yet fully recovered from a fever caught in the Florida swamps. Therefore, I decided to visit California for a year or two to see its wonderful flora and the famous Yosemite Valley. All the world was before me and every day was a holiday, so it did not seem important to which one of the world's wildernesses I should first wander.

"Arriving by the Panama steamer, I stopped one day in San Francisco and then inquired for the nearest way out of town. 'But where do you want to go?' asked the man to whom I had applied for this important information. 'To any place that is wild,' I said. This reply startled him. He seemed to fear I might be crazy and therefore the sooner I was out of town the better, so he directed me to the Oakland ferry.

"So, on the first of April, 1868, I set out afoot for the Yosemite. It was the bloom time of the year over the lowland and coast ranges; the landscapes of the Santa Clara Valley were fairly drenched with sunshine, all the air was quivering with songs of the meadow larks and the hills were so covered with flowers that they seemed to be painted. Slow indeed was my progress through these glorious mountains, the first of the California flora I had seen. Cattle and cultivation were making few scars yet, and I wandered enchanted in long wavering curves, knowing by my pocket map that Yosemite Valley lay to the east and I should surely find it.

"The Yosemite is situated in the basin of the Merced River at an elevation of 4,000 feet above the level of the sea. It is about seven miles long, half a mile to a mile wide and nearly a mile deep in the solid granite flank of the range. The walls are made up of rocks, mountains in size, partly separated from each other by side cañons, and they are so sheer in front and so compactly and harmoniously arranged on a level floor that the valley, comprehensively seen, looks like an immense hall or temple lighted from above.

"But no temple made with hands can compare with Yosemite. Every rock in its walls seems to glow with life. Some lean back in majestic repose; others absolutely sheer, or nearly so, for thousands of feet, advance beyond their companions in thoughtful attitudes, giving welcome to storms and calms alike, seemingly aware yet heedless of everything going on about them.

"Awful in stern, immovable majesty, how softly these rocks are adorned and how fine and reassuring the company they keep, their feet among beautiful grooves and meadows, their brows in the sky, a thousand flowers leaning confidently against their feet bathed in floods of water, floods of light, while the snow and waterfalls, the wind and avalanches and clouds shine and sing and wreathe about them as the years go by, and myriads of small winged creatures—birds, bees, butterflies—give glad animation and help to make all the air into music. Down through the middle of the valley flows the crystal Merced, River of Mercy, peacefully quiet, reflecting lilies and trees and the onlooking rocks; things frail and fleeting and types of endurance meeting here and blending in countless forms, as if into this one mountain mansion nature had gathered her choicest treasures to draw her lovers into close and confiding communion with her."

Mr. Muir tells of an exciting adventure that once came unexpectedly to him when he was enjoying the Yosemite Fall by moonlight:

"A wild scene but not a safe one," he says, "is made by the moon as it appears through the edge of the Yosemite Fall when one is behind it. Once after enjoying the night song of the waters and watching the formation of the colored bow as the moon came around the domes and sent her beams into the wild uproar I ventured out on the narrow bench that extends back of the fall from Fern Lodge and began to admire the dim veiled grandeur of the view.

"I could see the fine gauzy threads of the fall's filmy border by having the light in front, and, wishing to look at the moon through the meshes of some of the denser portions of the fall, I ventured to creep further behind it while it was gently wind swayed without taking sufficient thought about the consequences of its swaying back to its natural position after the wind pressure should be removed. The effect was enchanting, fine savage music sounding above, beneath, around me, while the moon, apparently in the very midst of the rushing waters, seemed to be struggling to keep her place on account of the ever varying form and density of the water masses through which she was seen, now darkly veiled or eclipsed by a rush of thick headed comets, now flashing out through openings between their tails.

"I was in fairyland between the dark wall and the wild throng of illumined waters, but suffered sudden disenchantment, for, like the witch scene in 'Alloway Kirk,' 'in an instant all was dark.' Down came a dash of spent comets, thin and harmless looking in the distance, but they felt desperately solid and stony when they struck my shoulders, like a mixture of choking spray and gravel and big hailstones.

"Instinctively dropping to my knees, I gripped an angle of the rock, curled up like a young fern frond with my face pressed against my breast, and in this attitude submitted as best I could to my thundering bath. The heavier masses seemed to strike like cobblestones and there was a confused noise of many waters about my ears—hissing, gurgling, clashing sounds that were not heard as music. The situation was quickly realized. How fast one's thoughts burn in time of stress! I was weighing chances of escape. Would the column be swayed a few inches away from the wall or would it come yet closer? The fall was in flood and not so lightly would its ponderous mass be swayed. My fate seemed to depend on a breath of 'idle wind.' It was moved gently forward, the pounding ceased and I was once more visited by glimpses of the moon. But fearing I might be caught at a disadvantage in making too hasty a retreat, I moved only a few feet along the bench to where a block of ice lay: I wedged myself between the ice and the wall and lay face downward until the steadiness of the light gave encouragement to rise and get away.

"Somewhat nerve shaken, drenched and benumbed, I made out to build a fire, warmed myself, ran home, reached my cabin before daylight, got an hour or two of sleep and awoke sound and comfortable, better, not worse, for my hard midnight bath."

In his exhaustive treatment of the Yosemite Mr. Muir includes the routes and directions for many excursions, planned with reference to the amount of time at the tourist's disposal.

Mr. Balfour's Demand of Literature.

From the London Daily Mail.

Mr. Balfour, in proposing the toast of "Literature" at the anniversary dinner of the Royal Literary Fund at the Whitehall Rooms last night, said:

"I think that literature is less cheerful now than it was when I was young. It may be because I am growing old that I take this gloomier view of literary effort, but still I personally like the spring day and bright sun and the birds singing and if there be a shower or a storm that it should be simply a passing episode in the landscape, to be followed immediately by a return to brilliant sunshine. While that is what I prefer I of course admit that the great, the picturesque, the striking storm is a magnificent subject for artistic treatment and is well worthy of the efforts of a great artist.

"I am not quite so sure, however, about the dreary day in which nothing is seen, in which the landscape does not change, in which there is a steady but not violent downpour of rain. I do not say that that ought not to be treated as a subject of literature, but it is not what I ask of literature.

"What I ask from literature mainly is that in a world that is full of sadness and full of difficulty, in which you come through the day wearied, in which you come back from your work wearied you should find in literature something which represents life which is true in the higher sense of truth or what is imagined to be true, but which does cheer us. Therefore when I ask you to drink the toast of 'Literature' I shall myself sotto voce say 'not literature merely, but that literature in particular which served the great cause of cheering us all up.'"

The Rothschilds as Writers.

From the London Chronicle.

Although literature has never produced a millionaire, several millionaires have produced literature. The Rothschilds alone have between them written enough books to fill a good sized shelf. The most prolific writer of the family is Dr. Henri de Rothschild. Besides "La Rampe," just produced at the Little Theatre, this versatile plutocrat is responsible for several medical works and about half a dozen travel books, including some interesting "Notes sur l'Angleterre."

The best history of the French postal service is by Baron Arthur de Rothschild and Baron James, the late head of the French branch, wrote a number of bibliographical works. Lord Rothschild's eldest son has issued several sumptuous volumes on birds and beasts, and Mr. L. A. de Rothschild is the author of "Shakespeare and His Day."